

WEEKLY.]

The Musical World.

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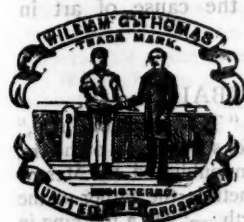
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The Musical World.

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Facts and Comments.

A good deal has been said about the modern miracle
play—for as such only can it be classed—recently performed
at Croydon, where an enterprising cleric appeared as the
author of a sacred drama entitled "The Conversion of
England." We can but be in entire sympathy with all such
attempts at extending the domain of art, when they are
conceived and made in accordance with rules of good taste,
not to say good art; but a more flagrant transgression of
these can hardly be imagined than the introduction of a
surprised choir to sing selections from "Hymns Ancient and
Modern," between the acts, or the accompaniment of a pagan
religious ceremonial by a performance of Scharwenka's
"Polish Dances." In all such things, the step from the
sublime to the ridiculous is extremely short; and though,
in the present instance, the performance may not have been
absolutely ridiculous, it certainly was not sublime. The
reverend playwright is undoubtedly a valiant man; and there
is honour for his valour, but, for his music —!

Reflecting upon such an incident, one is inevitably led to
think of Goethe's remark that a religious picture is generally
a bad one. It is a hard saying; but less false than most general-
isations on art—or indeed, on anything. Not more true,
however, is its antithesis—that art and religion have nothing
in common. Midway between these the truth lies. But it
may be admitted that music can include the religious element
to a larger extent than any of its sister arts without loss of

power, as art. This is probably because an art which perforce can find expression only through material symbols, as painting, must of necessity lose in definiteness by the introduction of the religious spirit. The history of painting offers abundant proof of this; it was in the crude and formal work of Fra Angelico and his brethren that the religious spirit found its sweetest and purest interpretation. As art grew stronger, the religious temper became less apparent, or rather, its character underwent transformation till, at its very highest point—whether we consider that point attained by Raphael, or Titian and the Venetians—there is little of that sweetness and divinity of the early Florentines. Music is as yet so young that dogmatism as to its future, or even its capabilities, as a medium of religious expression, is out of place. This, however, is certain, that it will always refuse to be a crystallisation of theology, which is in itself crystallised speculation. That in it the deepest needs and yearnings of humanity may find expression, is felt by all. For the rest, let it be remembered that the eternal principle has many phases; truth and beauty are but two. The philosopher would see one, the artist the other; but to look on both with equal vision has not yet been granted to man. This too may be said; he to whom that sight were given, would have no need of art.

The funeral of the late Dr. Hueffer took place on the 24th ult. at the St. Pancras Cemetery, Finchley. A large number of friends, many of them distinguished in the world of art, assembled, amongst them being Mr. Theodore Watts, Dr. A. C. Mackenzie, Mr. A. Randegger, Mr. Wilhelm Ganz, Mr. W. G. Cusins, Mr. Henry Russell, Mr. Sutherland Edwards, Mr. W. R. S. Ralston, Mr. Shields, and Mr. Joseph Barnby. Owing to the prevailing uncertainty as to the place of burial, many who were anxious to attend were prevented from doing so. A very large number of wreaths were sent from, amongst others, Madame Patti, Madame Minnie Hauk, and Signor Nicolini. There was no formal ceremony of any kind. *Sit tibi terra levis.*

An extremely valuable and interesting addition has just been made to the library of the Paris Conservatoire, in the shape of the original manuscript of Beethoven's "Sonata Appassionata," which has been sold by M. Renée Baillot to the institution in question for the nominal sum of 600 francs—having been purchased at the sale of the composer's effects for 36 kreutzers. We have spoken of the transaction as a sale; but, in view of the almost unique importance of the manuscript, it can hardly be so described, for M. Baillot has parted with it simply that it may not pass out of French possession. Were further proof desired of the vendor's generosity, it might be found in the fact that he has handed over the purchase-money to the pension fund of the "Association des artistes Musiciens."

The destruction of Mr. Phillip H. Newman's fine fresco at the Belsize Square church, seems to emphasise what is, for church musicians as well as for painters, an intolerable evil—the vitiation of atmosphere by gas. A few years since, those who were weary of seeing their pictures, picture-frames, and books ruined by gas were encouraged to think that gas was doomed to extinction—in every way; but, stirred to activity by the electricians, the gas companies for a while produced something less aggressively obnoxious than before. That the improvement was only of a temporary nature, is proved by the complaints made on all sides of the old kind. Here a fresco has been ruined which otherwise would have lasted for generations; organ-builders are in despair, for their instruments cannot be kept in tune, and they search—apparently in vain—for some material for fittings which will withstand the noxious gas. And meanwhile the Tenth Muse is dumb.

The financial results of a season of German Opera would appear to be best represented by the mystic letter x . During the season of 1882 at Drury Lane, the takings averaged about £500 nightly. Here x is, at least, equivalent to payment of expenses. In New York, on the other hand, the solution of the equation is not, unfortunately a positive one, for it appears that there is a nightly loss at the Metropolitan Opera House of about 1,000 dollars. It is difficult for anyone not entirely familiar with the local circumstances to account for the difference; for—despite certain extraordinary criticisms of Wagner's music that flow with fatuous facility from some Transatlantic critics—the American amateur is scarcely behind the English in musical taste.

Mr. F. H. Cowen's cantata, "Sleeping Beauty," was recently performed, for the first time, at the Melbourne Exhibition, the composer, of course, conducting. The graceful and charming work seems to have commended itself to the favour of the antipodean musicians, who have, by this time, said their last farewell to one who has so worthily and loyally conducted his embassy. That Mr. Cowen has helped to bind us more closely to our distant kinsmen, cannot be doubted; still less is it open to question that he has done much to advance the cause of art in Australia.

"THE DREAM OF JUBAL."

The score of Dr. Mackenzie's new work, "The Dream of Jubal," which is described as "A poem with music for soli, chorus, orchestra, and accompanied recitation," has just been published by Messrs. Novello, Ewer and Co. Mr. Joseph Bennett is the author of the book, the argument of which is thus set forth:—"On a morning in spring-time, Jubal leaves his tent, and, taking with him his shell, wanders abroad. His fingers idly touch the strings, and all nature hushes itself to listen; presently, as the strange music ceases, raising its voices in a rival song. Observing the fulness and grandeur of Nature's hymn, Jubal deplores the weakness of his own, and questions the future with a longing to know what it may have in store for the infant art of music. While thus engaged, a deep sleep falls upon him, and he dreams a dream. In vision an angel comes with words of reproach for discontent, but, also, with a mission to reveal to the father of music the after-development of his art. In succession, the celestial messenger causes him to hear:—a Chorus or Praise in Divine Worship; a Song of Comfort in Bereavement; a patriotic March and Chorus of Victory; a Song of a Labourer in the Harvest-field; a Funeral March in honour of a Hero; and a Duet of Lovers. Deeply impressed by the dream, Jubal, on awakening, adorns his shell with flowers, and reverently bearing it to the altar, dedicates to God a "wondrous gift," calling upon his children through all time "to invoke with sounding praise the holy art." A chorus of invocation ends the work."

Mr. Bennett's verses are of an exceptionally high order of merit, praise which applies especially to the lines for recitation (written in blank verse) which comprise about half the poem. Of Dr. Mackenzie's share of the work, we prefer, judging solely from a perusal of the vocal score, the Funeral March and Chorus "Weep for the Glorious Dead," "The Song of the Sickle," and certain portions of the music which accompanies the recitation, notably the theme heard when Jubal strikes the "Chorded Shell." The "Chorus of Praise in Divine Worship" is a setting of the "Gloria," Latin words being used; this, the longest number, occupies thirty pages of the score. It is succeeded by a solo for soprano, "The Lord is good to them that wait for Him," and this by the Triumphal March "Hail to the Chief and his Sword," the music of which is of a barbaric and harshly jubilant rather than festal character. Dr. Mackenzie is to be thanked for painting war in something like an approach to its true colours. The final "Invocation" for soprano, tenor and chorus has a fine broad melody, finishing with the phrase from the "Messiah" "And He shall reign for ever and ever" which the composer has also used elsewhere in the work as a "quotation." "The Dream of Jubal" will be heard in public for the first time on Tuesday next, at Liverpool.

THE "C MINOR SYMPHONY."

BY G. W. L. MARSHALL-HALL.

SECTION I.

The extraordinary similarity, both of mind and manner of thought, between those two great world-spirits, Shakespeare and Beethoven, is nowhere more vividly exemplified than in that masterwork the C minor Symphony, which, in the realm of music, may be considered second only to the Ninth Symphony, the crown of this philosopher's life.

As in the deepest and grandest of Shakespeare's tragedies, so in this tragedy of Beethoven's own life, we find awesomeness, jocularity, solemnity, broad laughter; tears, smiles; fiercest passion, gentlest tenderness; hope, despair; boldness, timidity; frenzied yearning—all intermingled, interwoven—one taking birth from or fading away into another in endless variety, until, with shut eyes, we seem to feel before us a great hero-heart swelling and shrinking under the mighty passions of his kind, with each of whose palpitations our own little hearts, in spite of themselves, tremble and throb.

How entirely definite was the design of this work in Beethoven's mind, may be gathered from the ready and striking words with which this genius, to whom speech was usually a difficult labour, answered the query as to what caused him to write down those simple, yet extraordinary four notes with which the Symphony opens—"So knocks Fate at the door!"

We small men are but too apt, in our conceited egoism, to pass over the pregnant sayings of Genius, as though they had fallen from the barrenness of one of our own species. Seldom did Beethoven venture on any explanation of his works; when he did so his remarks are worthy our most profound study. In sooth, this pithy figurative sentence, "Fate knocks at the door," gives us the clue to the meaning and spirit of the whole Symphony.

To understand the meaning underlying these words, we must for a moment glance at the nature of that gift which exalts man to equality with the gods—genius. In another place I have shewn that genius, using the term in its strict sense—as applied to the workings of the soul, and not to mechanical dexterity or inventiveness, which is talent—is merely an extraordinary capability for sympathy. A sympathy so mighty that once aroused it leaves its possessor no rest, forcing him on, in despite of every obstacle, to express what is in him. "Genius does what it *must*, talent what it *can*;" and the former may be but often is not accompanied by the latter. In the case of Beethoven it was *not*. His difficulty in expressing himself was almost equally great in language, painting, and music. Only with infinite labour, struggle and pain did he manage to give an idea of a small portion of his great heart to the world. This reflection brings us to the point at issue. Wherefore should genius descend from its heavenly heights, wherein it revels; plunge from its lofty soul-surroundings into the unclean slough of littleness in which ordinary humanity wallows; to be leered at with lewd eyes, spat at by foul mouths, hustled by savage hands? Why indeed? Why not live happy in its own ethereal dominion, far from this uncongenial atmosphere? Why? . . . Fate knocks at the door! "Up man! and *do*! No longer mayst thou, stretched on the dream-curtained couch of Elysium, wonder away thy all-important life! Wherefore art thou made with this god-sight? Wherefore raised to the state of an Immortal? Not that thou mayst dwell in life-long ecstasy! No! else hadst thou been created wholly a god. Wherefore thinkest that thou art half-god and half-man? . . . O dreamer! that having an eye of a god and the tongue of a man, thou mightest see the Heavenly, and tell it to thy earth-born brethren. Up! up! Sleep no longer! Awake, and to thy fellow-mortals declare thy dream. For *thee* is it appointed to guide them to goodness, to righteousness! Each moment thou wastest is a sin unrepented, unrepealable. What! Art thou bruised and mocked by thy kind? Yea! but hast thou not a heaven wherein to refresh, recover thy wounded limbs? Hast thou not a vigour-restoring elixir which shall endow thee with the strength of a thousand armies? Up! and reflect how this wondrous truth thou hast learnt may be imparted to thy fellow-men."

Such, I take it, was the awful message which struck on the soul of Beethoven, and which he embodied in those four tremendous initial notes of this Symphony. Mark the pause! Seldom are these

bars (2 and 5) sustained for the necessary time, or with sufficient loudness. It is impossible for the conductor to allow any diminution in tone during these pauses, which should be of a length to arouse the attention of the most careless. Note the additional bar prefixed to the latter of the two.* Then the *piano* that follows: how often is it not played *mezzo-forte*, which bad interpretation takes away its whole significance? For is not this the fearful flutter of the heart, awakened from its dreams by the awful God-voice, whose accents echo through its trembling frame? "What? Where?" it seems to pant forth. "Do I yet dream? Speak again! O, if thou be a Spirit, speak yet once again that I may know I have not dreamed! Speak! Speak!" How wonderfully the music says all this; how wonderfully it depicts how the first utter prostration of mind gives way to a desperate resolve to summon that awe-striking voice once more—notice the pause on the single note (bar 21), how significant! It seems to say "yea, even if it be death I will hear thee again, O dread voice!" and the answer comes. The pause on bar 24 is commonly shortened even by conductors who give their due to those on bars 2 and 5. And yet it should be, if anything, of even longer duration. Is it not the affirmation of those; the answer to the tremulous query of the preceding sixteen bars?—then let it tone forth distinct and firm. I would here notice how often this movement is hurried, with most detrimental effects, which are felt throughout. Not only does such a culpable and unseemly proceeding alter the whole character of the movement, which is not of frenzied passion, but of self-doubting yearning, child-like longing for wisdom, of stern rebuke and resolve—but it utterly destroys the awesomeness and solemnity of the chief motive. The wind, so fast is it sometimes taken, are unable to distinctly ejaculate their passages, and in their efforts to do so, give an impression of bustle, confusion, and haste which gruesomely caricatures the grand intentions of the poet.—To continue:—Again (bar 25) that dread voice vibrates through the agitated soul, which, however, no longer doubting, seems to gather courage (notice the gradual rise from bars 33 to 44, and the strength and force of the culmination, bars 44—58) and say: "Now I know that Thou hast spoken. I fain would obey, but—alas! I know not how. O instruct me! Speak!"—but there is silence—"speak!" again silence, and then the response majestically sounds forth . . . How decisive and wonderful is this horn-passage (bar 59) in its variation, or rather *extension* of bars one and two. It is as if it were an outstretched finger guiding the eye to some scarce discernible goal. Never have I heard it given with its proper signification.

It requires greater clearness, dignity, purity of tone, freedom from haste, than it commonly receives. Not only this, but the *tempo* must slightly relax here, and in the following bars, for this point marks an entire change in the character of the music. The startled soul, rudely aroused from its dreams, seems to wander from spot to spot, grasping at every shadow, in hopes thereby to relieve itself of its burden, ever spurred on by the ceaseless vibrations of those first strident tones. "Where, O where," it complains, "shall I find one to understand me, wherewithal to make myself understood? O brother-man, so near, and yet so far, how may I reach to your heart, as this great voice to mine? O help me, do you not *feel* what I would say to you?" Marvellously are these emotions expressed at bar 63. This, one of Beethoven's most tender, inspired passages, is invariably in interpretation cruelly robbed of its tenderness. The true phrasing is as follows:



the first beat of bar 3 being a little drawn out beyond its mathematically correct duration, while receiving a perceptible accent; indeed, the weight of the phrase lies on this note. Those who state that a strict *tempo* must invariably be observed, can simply know little, and feel nothing of tone-poetry. Our system of bars was not intended to introduce mathematical regularity into our scores, which would destroy all emotional effect, but merely to indicate the general rhythmical tendency; to enforce the accentuation of certain

* Since writing this I have come across precisely the same remarks uttered by no less an authority than Richard Wagner himself concerning this unique passage.

notes. Curiously enough, halt tradition has brought about that whereas most conductors stick, with a pertinacity born of desperate courage, to their clock-work *tempo*, they do not pay anything approaching adequate attention to *accent*, without which the performance of a music-poem may be likened to the delivery of a recitation by one who does not understand a word of what he is saying. Strange that music should still be so foreign to us that we even now do not perceive the absurdity of such a proceeding! There is a well-known story of Beethoven which tells how, when he could no longer hear, the orchestra used to arrange to follow the *tempo* given by their leader. Why? Because Beethoven, moved by the inner soul of his music, forgot the unliability of the orchestra, and played, in his own mind, each passage at its true *tempo*; thus, probably, never taking any twenty consecutive bars at *precisely* the same degree of speed, and indeed, as in the instance before us, often dwelt momentarily on any single note to which he desired to give especial prominence.

(To be continued.)

TRAVELLERS' NOTES.

II.

(Continued from page 22.)

One of Dr. Reeve's best friends in Vienna was Herr Jacquin, the chief of a well-known clan—the Jacquins had been great allies of Mozart's some twenty years before the present date; Gottfried Jacquin, in particular, was very musical, and sang well. The Mozarts and he were often together, and many a song and trio did the good-natured and light-hearted *maestro* throw off for him. Indeed, a bass song, "Io te lascio," composed by Jacquin, is still frequently included among Mozart's works. An interesting account of the family is given by Jahn in his "Life of Mozart" (Novello), vol. ii, 356.

During the period of suspense, on November 23, the news of the battle of Trafalgar began to be talked of in Vienna. The battle took place on Oct. 21, so that it had been five weeks in arriving at the Austrian capital! In France it was never much known; and then as a French victory; the Emperor, rightly recognising its immense importance, kept it a secret as far as possible.

Dr. Reeve's next opera was Zingarelli's "Romeo and Juliet," which was revived after a considerable interval. Crescentini sang the part of Romeo, and in it "excelled anything that was ever heard." His "solo at the tomb is one of the most exquisite things that can be conceived"—evidently far beyond poor Fidelio's air of "In des Lebens Frühlingstagen"—and "the impression left on my mind was that this was the best and most perfect specimen of an Italian opera that I had ever heard." And yet Zingarelli's "Romeo and Juliet" is now absolutely dead, while Beethoven's "Fidelio" is heard every day with more delight. So much for the contemporary judgment of the world on music!

A great deal of interesting information is given about the state of Vienna during the occupation of the French, the battle of Austerlitz, and the other wonderful events of the time; but these events bear very slightly on music, and tempting as the subject is, we must refer the reader to the book itself for them. Reeve saw the Emperor Napoleon at Mass at Schönbrunn; the impression left on his mind being "that of increased admiration;" and on the evening of Christmas Day, in a climate "mild, wet, and dirty from a gentle thaw," after dining on roast beef and plum pudding, he went "to hear the oratorio 'The Seasons,' composed by Haydn on subjects taken from our poet Thomson." The performance was evidently not good. Nothing in its music struck Dr. Reeve "as particularly fine;" while "the words were trumpery—a downright murder of Jemmy Thomson." A day or two before this he went to a "public concert at the theatre on Sunday night" (we trust his journal was not read in Edinburgh); Cherubini was the conductor, the vocal music—his composition—"nothing remarkable." An oboe player he heard makes a bad figure by the side of "Michael Sharp." Let us hope that "distance did not lend enchantment to the view." On the 28th he gave a ball, at which "twelve couple stood up in a country dance, called here an 'Ecosaise.'"

Dr. Reeve now and then quotes an epigram. One of these is fairly good, though the French is rather German here and there:

J'ai vu le palais somptueux
Q'habite à la campagne.
Pendant l'été, François Deux;
Sur le choix s'il me demandait,
Je préfère, foi d'homme honnête,
La campagne qu'il habite
A la Campagne qu'il a faite.

At length, on February 4, Dr. Reeve left Vienna for Prague and Dresden. Nothing happens to detain him in Prague, and he arrives in Dresden on February 10. Mr. Pitt's death was one of the first pieces of news he got. A week afterwards he goes to the Italian opera. "A comic opera by Cimarosa; very good and well performed," the orchestration particularly so. The opera is in the same theatre with the German plays, but twice a week. The price, sixteen groschen for first rank of boxes and pit; second rank, eight groschen—say tenpence.

(To be continued.)

Correspondence.

"TRISTAN UND ISOLDE."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR,—I have read Mr. Marshall Hall's paper on "Tristan und Isolde" with great interest. The part which the Love-potion plays in that marvellous work has long been the subject of much thought to me, and I used to be of the opinion which Mr. Marshall Hall states so temperately, namely, that it was a blot upon the work and a very curious lapse into the commonplace on the part of its author. But after studying the poem very carefully (in evidence of which I may say that I have made a literal translation of it) and after repeatedly seeing it performed, a new light has dawned on me.

The love-potion is not a conjuring trick, a *deus ex machina*, a feeble contrivance of a third rate play-wright at his wits' end for a situation; on the contrary, it plays but a very small part in the drama; it is but a mere accident. I shall make my view clear if I put the situation, as I conceive it, into plain words.

Tristan and Isolde have been deeply, passionately in love long before the drama opens, but as they are mortal enemies they have not spoken. So strong, however, is this love that one look out of Tristan's eyes is enough to disarm Isolde when she purposes to avenge the death of Morold, her betrothed, by slaying Tristan his slayer. This fact is of vital importance, and is insisted on in the earlier part of the drama; witness Isolde's mental condition at the rise of the curtain, witness especially, her words:—

Mir erkoren,—
mir verloren,—

That Tristan loves her equally is shown in the same delicate and clear manner by his start at Isolde's name when Kurwenal exclaims

Hab Acht, Tristan!
Botschaft von Isolde!

If the words and attitude are not sufficiently eloquent the orchestral phrase which accompanies them:



leaves no doubt possible, as it grows out of the *Motif of Desire*. Tristan, out of loyalty to King Marke, refuses an interview with Isolde. So in her utter despair she determines that they shall both die. Note, that in my view they are both conscious of each other's love, conscious that only the rigid necessities of life stand in the way of utter possession. Isolde orders Brangäne to prepare the death-

drink and forces Tristan into her presence upon the plea that he is to drink atonement with her; a plea which no knightly hero can refuse. Brangäne changes the potion. Isolde believes it to be the death-drink and Tristan has read her mind and is sure that the cup holds death. Witness his words:

den Becher nehm ich nun
dass ganz ich heut' genesse!
• • • • •
Vergessens gü't'ger Trank!
Dich trink' ich sonder Wank.

Here is the position: they love each other, they may not speak of their love while they live, but they have drained the cup of death, and death is immediately to follow. They face each other, eye to eye, reading each other's soul. Death is coming; why not speak? Death is coming: life is past, the world is sliding away, honour now is nothing, why not speak? why not? why not? The words come unbidden; they are nothing:—

ISOLDE.—Tristan!
TRISTAN.—Isolde!

It is done. The love is confessed. Brangaene acknowledges her fraud. Too late: the love is confessed. These two needed no love-potion; a cup of water drunk under the idea that it brought death would have had the same result. So would any accident, such as the foundering of the ship.

Let me re-state my position:—

Tristan and Isolde have loved each other, but have not spoken their love. The potion which they drink, with the idea that they will immediately afterwards die, unseals their lips.

Now, then, instead of a childish hocus-pocus, entirely unworthy of Wagner, you have a magnificent psychological situation worthy of any poet.

I have tried to state my case as clearly and briefly as possible, and I submit it with all deference to the judgment of your readers.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

LOUIS N. PARKER

Another correspondent refers Mr. Marshall-Hall to a passage in the excellent preface by C. A. B., which appeared in the edition of the book of words published (with an English translation by H. and F. Corder), by Messrs Novello and Breitkopf and Härtel when the work was first heard here in 1882. The passage in question runs as follows:—

"For the avoidance of misapprehension in regard to the apparent silliness of introducing a love-potion and its operation in a tragic drama at this date, a word or two seems due in explanation of Wagner's mode of procedure. As being an integral portion of, and forming an important point in the early versions of the story, he could hardly have omitted it, and, for consistency's sake, was therefore obliged to retain it. In mediæval times the love-potion and its operation were symbolical of a superstitious belief in the supernatural, and thus, to some extent, resembled, if indeed it was not the natural outcome of, the irresistible Fate which pervaded the ancient Greek drama. Referring to the myth in its primitive form, which had its origin in natural phenomena, Wagner has continued the metaphor. In the early myth the Spring showers are not the first cause, but the revivifying principle of fertility. So with Wagner. It is not the love-potion which actually brings about Tristan and Isolde's love; it only does so metaphorically by leading to the discovery that they have been foiled in their determination to end their woes by poison."

This, it may be added, is not Mr. C. A. Barry's own explanation: it is authoritative. [Ed. M. W.]

THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF COMPOSERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR,—Your reference to Richard Strauss raises a point not without interest or importance, but where the remedy is to be found, and how applied, is not easy to determine. I may, however, state that in Mr. Edward Dannreuther we have at least one resident musician who not only looks out for novelties but produces them. This gentleman brought forward a pianoforte quartet (in C minor, Op. 13)

by Richard Strauss, as far back as December, 1886; and more than three years earlier introduced a pianoforte trio by Heinrich von Herzogenberg—another name not very familiar in this country. But the question still remains: how is the public of this England of ours to be made to take a real interest in contemporary musical art? And this not only as regards the compositions of foreign musicians but also of our native composers; for the same apathy appears to prevail in both cases. I think your remark is a part of, although not the whole, truth, *i.e.*, "The English musical public has no curiosity, because it has no judgment, and it is afraid to look at a new thing because it does not know whether it ought to admire or not."

Now, sir, it seems to be admitted that the English public established the fame of Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Dvorák, and has undoubtedly appreciated Wagner whenever his works have been adequately presented; but in the case of genius of less exalted or pronounced type, there is hesitation, if not indifference.

Literature and painting seem to fare better. In these arts the man of talent, in his sphere, commands recognition as does the man of genius in his higher range, but in music there seems to be less judgment and discrimination on the part of the public. To recognise a genius of the first order is not an effort; such an artist compels it by the sheer force of his gifts. But the budding talent of a beginner needs encouragement, and it is here that artistic insight is required; and this power is not yet conspicuous in the English character, as a rule. It seems to me that the press here has failed to some extent, and its function as a guide to, and former of, public opinion not been sufficiently kept in view. One thing seems certain. Whatever the shortcomings, artistically, of the public may be, some one or more can bravely attack the critics. It is a pity the latter are too busy to attend in more detail to the education of their opponents.

I am, sir, yours faithfully,

STEPHEN S. STRATTON.

Birmingham January, 1889.

AN APPEAL FOR LIGHT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MUSICAL WORLD."

SIR,—Your columns recently contained a complaint as to the draughty character of St. James's Hall. May I ask you for space in which to make an appeal for more light?

The introduction of the electric light, though doubtless beneficial to the occupants of stalls and balcony, has not given equal satisfaction to the *habitues* of the gallery. As at first arranged, below the level of the gallery floor, the burners formed a screen of light, through which lay the only visual route to the orchestra. A petition to the directors, pointing out the clumsy and painful nature of this plan, was speedily drawn up, and numerous signatures obtained, the result of its presentation being a partial re-arrangement of the lights. Far from satisfactory as this has always been regarded, no further steps have hitherto been taken, for it was hoped the authorities would come and learn for themselves that something yet remained to be done. We have, however, waited in vain. Half the lamps are still below our feet, where they are useless for illuminating purposes and most irritating to the sight. Thus is it with those who sit in the front. Those at the back, since the petition stimulated the generosity of the authorities, I fancy, have been supplied with *three single burners*! The feeble light from these and a few of the central lamps in the hall itself are, in managerial wisdom, deemed sufficient for space which holds some two hundred people. In consequence of this niggardly treatment, but a small number of persons find it possible to read music or other type. The lot of the frequenters of this gallery is not, in many respects, a happy one, but, I contend, we have a right to ask that in this simple matter it may be made happier. The lights over the orchestra have always been four or five times as many as those over the gallery. Yet they have been found so inadequate that, only within the past few days, their number has been very largely increased. Perhaps if you will lend your advocacy in our behalf a like abundance may be graciously conceded to us; when you may count upon the grateful thanks of many besides, Sir, your obedient servant,

London, N.W., January 21, 1889.

GALLERVITE.

Coming Events.

Notices for insertion in this column should reach the office of the "MUSICAL WORLD," not later than Wednesday mid-day.

The programme of the Royal Amateur Orchestral Society's concert, which takes place this evening in St. James's Hall, will include Gounod's First Symphony, the orchestral arrangement of Mackenzie's "Benedictus" and Beethoven's "Leonora" overture, No. 3. Mdlles. Marianne and Clara Eissler will give violin and harp solos, and Miss van Heddegham and Miss Douglas will be the vocalists.

The Woodside Park Musical Society will perform Smart's "Bride of Dunkerron" at Woodside Hall, on Thursday next, under the conductorship of Mr. Alfred J. Dye.

A Fine Art, Ecclesiastical, Educational and Industrial Exhibition will be held at York, from June to October, in aid of the County Hospital and the City Dispensary. The exhibition will be on a very large scale, and a number of medals and diplomas will be awarded in each section.

At the performance of the "Elijah" this afternoon by the Royal Choral Society, the principal vocalists will be Mesdames Nordica and Belle Cole, Messrs. Banks and Henschel, while minor parts will be taken by Miss Marianne Fenna, Miss Julia Neilson, Mr. Arthur Thompson, and Mr. Cross.

Tschaikowsky's "Solemn Overture" will be repeated (by desire) at the Symphony Concert on Tuesday next. The programme will also include Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony.

Mr. Valentine Smith announces the "Bohemian Girl" for performance at the Olympic this evening and next week.

Herr Ragnar Grevillius announces a concert to take place at the Steinway Hall on the 26th inst.

Publishers' Announcements.

GEORGE GILL & SONS' LIST.

GILL'S MOVEMENT PLAYS AND ACTION SONGS. Foolscap 4to. Boards ... 1/-
Consists of a systematic collection of Plays and Games set to suitable Music for Teachers to use in the Playground and School, or for Birthday, Christmas, and other children's parties.

McCARTNEY'S MUSICAL DRILL ... 2/6
The course of Musical Drill has become very popular in many Inspectors' Districts.

BALLADS FOR BABIES, WITH MERRY MOVEMENTS.
By JENNETT HUMPHREYS. Cloth cover, 4to. ... 2/6
Being Two Dozen original Action Songs, set to charming Music, for the merest babes of all in the school and nursery.

BALLADS FOR INFANTS, WITH MERRY MOVEMENTS.
By JENNETT HUMPHREYS. Cloth cover, 4to. ... 2/6
This work is similar to the above, but it is intended for an older class of infants. Both are extremely popular.

GILL'S CHARMING SONGS FOR LITTLE WARBLERS ... 1/-
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FEBRUARY 9 - Miss LUCILLE SAUNDERS.



MADLLE. MARIE VAGNOLINI.

MADLLE. MARIE VAGNOLINI, the soprano whose portrait we present to our readers this week, is one of the comparatively few singers who own London as their birth place. Here she was born and here she received her musical education. Her first instructor was her father, Cavaliere Raffaello Vagnolini, to whose careful training she doubtless owes much. Her next *maestro* was Signor Solla, of La Scala, Milan; and subsequently she pursued her studies under Mr. T. A. Wallworth. Madlle. Vagnolini's public career may be said to have commenced at the age of 11, when she sang at a concert given for a charitable purpose. Her voice is of considerable compass, ranging from the lower G to E flat in alt, and her linguistic attainments are of a very comprehensive kind. Her chief successes have been made at the Crystal Palace and Her Majesty's Theatre.

PROVINCIAL.

EDINBURGH, January 29, 1889.

The concluding concert of Mr. Paterson's orchestral and choral series, which have again proved a financial success, took place last night. The programme contained Schubert's grand Symphony in B flat, No. 10—the performance of which occupied the whole of the second part; Sterndale Bennett's "Naiades" overture; the Scherzo from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony; an interesting Concerto ("Romantique") for violin and orchestra by Godard, the violin part of which was well sustained by M. Johannes Wolff, this being his first appearance in Edinburgh; and Hamish MacCunn's Ballad for orchestra, "Ship o' the Fiend."

At the previous Concert on the 21st inst., chief interest centred in the performance of two other works, by Mr. MacCunn, "Bonny Kilmeny," which, on this occasion, was heard for the first time in its complete form with orchestral accompaniment, and "The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow" overture; and both compositions had moreover the advantage of the composer's direction. The rest of the programme was made up of Schumann's B flat Symphony; a selection of part songs, admirably sung by Mr. Kirkhope's Choir, which also supplied,

in a very efficient manner, the choral requirements of Mr. MacCunn's Cantata, and a song by each of the vocalists, Miss Larkcom, Mr. Iver M'Kay and Mr. Bantock Pierpoint, who also rendered the principal parts in the same work.

Of the true merits of Mr. MacCunn's Cantata it is now much easier to form a judgment than was possible on the occasion of its first hearing a few weeks ago, when it was unsupported by a band; and that judgment must be altogether favourable. The work, although it cannot be admitted to disclose any touches of genius, nor to display any high scholastic attainment, does nevertheless unquestionably abound with flowing and agreeable melody, and with fresh and pleasing, not to say unlooked for, orchestral effects. As a whole, the cantata may be said to be a very charming idyllic sketch, rich and bright with promise. The two orchestral ballads—"The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow," and the "Ship o' the Fiend,"—referred to above, are, however, efforts of quite another *calibre*. In each of them may be discerned a wealth of thought and expression, coupled with earnestness of purpose—to which is superadded the indication of a thorough knowledge of orchestral resource—which at once fix and command attention, and which will possibly cause each subsequent effort on similar lines to be more eagerly anticipated, and more care

fully scrutinised, than its predecessor. For it is not to be believed that a young composer of Mr. MacCunn's undoubted power and ability will rest satisfied with his present achievement, in all respects creditable though they be. The obvious probability is that he will advance, and that rapidly, in the development of his art.

During his visit to Edinburgh Mr. MacCunn was feted alike by the "Society of Musicians" and by the "Pen and Pencil Club;" and on both occasions the possibility of instituting a National School of Music and of forming a Scottish Orchestra was earnestly canvassed; the "guest of the evening" expressing himself as fully prepared to bear his part in the promotion of either one or both projects.

On Saturday last Madame Roze-Mapleson, assisted by several other artists, among whom was Madlle. Marie Titiens, gave an afternoon Ballad Concert in the Music Hall, which was well attended.

CARDIFF, Jan. 1889.

The fourth concert of the present series of Chamber Music Concerts took place in the Lesser Park Hall, on Wednesday, the 23rd ult. Throughout the evening a large audience exhibited remarkable enthusiasm, for which there was full justification. The concerted items of the programme, viz., Trio in D, Op. 70 (No. 1), Beethoven; Variations in D, Op. 17, for pianoforte and 'cello, Mendelssohn, and Trio in F, Op. 42, Gade, were admirably played by Miss Marian Bateman (pianoforte), Mr. Joseph Ludwig (violin), and Mr. Whitehouse ('cello). The markedly warm manner in which these works were received served to show that our audiences are rapidly learning to appreciate good music. Miss Bateman chose for her solo Schubert's lovely Impromptu in B flat. This lady is, happily, no stranger here; but it is doubtful whether on any previous occasion she has created as favourable an impression. A more capable pianist we do not remember ever having heard in Cardiff. Mr. Ludwig gave two violin solos with such effect as to obtain an encore; and an excellent reception was awarded the vocal efforts of Mr. W. H. Wing, who enjoyed the advantage of Dr. Parry's accompaniment. Altogether the concert was a most gratifying success; and the satisfaction so demonstratively expressed should tend to revive the drooping spirits of the committee responsible for the performances.

IPSWICH, Jan. 30.

The Ipswich Choral Society gave a performance last evening of Dr. Bridge's "Callirhoe," under the conductorship of Mr. Lindley Nunn. Since I last had the opportunity of hearing this Society, considerable changes have taken place in its constitution, which, it must be confessed, have proved altogether for the better. Dr. Bridge's work does not contain a great deal of choral writing, but what there is demand no small executive ability on the part of its interpreters; and it can be readily stated that the performance last night was satisfactory in all points. I have seldom heard such solidity, such accuracy of attack and intonation, as were then exhibited: the basses were particularly good, their tone being unusually resonant and firm; while the tenors were—but this is too common to be singular—the weakest part of the chorus. The band was led very ably by Mr. Charles Cooke, and, although supplemented by importations, was in the main drawn from local sources. This will be sufficient to show that Mr. Nunn and his society are doing much to take away the reproach, which has rested for too long upon East Anglia, of being utterly indifferent to the higher forms of art. Mr. Nunn appears to possess that power, not to be found in all conductors, of compelling those under his direction to perform feats of musical valour that surprise no one so much as themselves; and from a somewhat apathetic body with no particular *raison d'être*, there has been developed a choral society which is of absolute value to the cause of provincial music. Probably no small share of this result is also due to Mr. Woolnough, the secretary, but, whatever the cause, the effect is patent. I should add that, on the occasion now in question, the solos were taken by Miss Anna Williams, who sang the music allotted to the stony-hearted Callirhoe with fine dramatic effect; Mr. Bernard Lane, who, as the amorous and rejected Coresos, was somewhat too languid, a defect not wholly atoned for by sweetness of voice; and Miss Gertrude Nunn, who in the small but important part of the Chief Priestess, was eminently satisfactory.

MANCHESTER, January 29.

Our anticipations of a delightful musical experience have not been more keenly aroused for a long time than they were by the announce-

ment of Sir Charles Hallé's fourteenth concert. For, in the first place, Madame Neruda (Lady Hallé) was to be there and was to play the "Kreutzer" Sonata with Sir Charles; secondly, Miss Macintyre was to be the vocalist, and finally the more important orchestral pieces had for us the charm of absolute novelty. These anticipations were very generally shared, as was shown by the crowded house; and so far as we are concerned they were entirely realised. Madame Neruda reached a level which even she does not always succeed in attaining, and by her fine playing of the Adagio and Rondo from Vieuxtemps' Concerto in E she gave an interest to these movements which their intrinsic merits could hardly have created. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the performance of the "Kreutzer," which revealed the consummate beauty of the work more clearly than any we have yet heard. Brahms' Symphony in E minor was the most prominent of the orchestral works. Though it has been given here once before it was new to us, and we are far from asserting that we entirely grasped its meaning and structure. Brahms is to a pronounced degree a writer who "clears up" after repeated hearings; at the same time a moderately intimate acquaintance with some of his works has not convinced us that he always escapes the charge of obscurity. Hence it was no surprise to find that the conclusion of the E minor Symphony left us doubting many things, and feeling that to a large extent it was only seen through a glass darkly. Above such uncertainties, however, arose the conviction that the work as a whole is the utterance of a mind which has had something great and worthy to tell us, and has striven with much learned meditation to tell it aright. Liszt's Symphonic Poem "Mazeppa" was given for the first time at these concerts. The composer has taken for his text not the well-known story but Victor Hugo's allegorical conception of it. There is both power and vividness in the work, but the latter part contains much that is trivial and unequal to the subject. Here, as often elsewhere, Liszt has aimed too high. Miss Macintyre was again triumphant, as such an artist could not fail to be. Her first song (Mozart's "Dove Sono"), admirable in almost every other respect, was slightly marred by a nervousness which, if due in any part to doubts as to the feeling of the audience towards her, was wholly unnecessary. It is because her gifts are so great, and her enthusiasm for her art so evident, that we would warn her against acquiring any of the exaggerations which her strong dramatic instincts will be so apt to tempt her into. This is no imaginary danger, for on Thursday last she shewed a tendency towards the *vibrato*, and towards sudden strong contrasts of volume, which we believe her calmer judgment would not approve of. But when criticism has done its worst there remains the fact that Miss Macintyre afforded us an amount of pleasure such as we rarely experience; and the enthusiasm created by each of her songs, but especially by Verdi's "Ah fors é lui," was quite unusual. One more remark and we have done. Marzials' "Leaving yet loving" is both pretty and effective; but it is not in music of this class that Miss Macintyre's talents find adequate scope. We once heard Titiens sing Schubert's "Young nun"—it is now many years ago, but the emotions which she aroused were such as we shall never forget. Perhaps no living singer could move us so deeply with this glorious song; but if anyone could, we believe it is Miss Macintyre.

Concerts.

POPULAR CONCERTS.

There is a decided tendency at these concerts—at least at the afternoon performances—to follow the fashion of shortening the programmes. Last Saturday the audience left the hall—the portion of it, we mean, who remained till the end—scarcely later than half-past four. If the performances lasted only twenty minutes, probably some would arrive late and leave early.

Madlle. Janotha chose as her solo the Carnival Scenes, omitting Eusebius, Florestan, Coquette, Replique, Sphinxes, and Estrella. The performance abounded in good points, a fine sense of humour being occasionally apparent; as, for example, the abrupt conclusion of the "Arlequin;" on the other hand, some effects were marred by Madlle. Janotha's disposition to take all slow movements and a considerable number of quick ones, at too great speed. "Paganini" and the march especially suffered in this respect; clearness in the former, and vigour in the latter, being sacrificed. But the greatest surprise—

a surprise which made the initiated open their eyes to their widest extent—was presented in the encore piece, which was nothing less familiar than Schumann's Arabesque in C. This was played "as quickly as possible"—which is rather a favourite time-indication of Schumann's, but one which he has not prefixed to his Arabesque—"lightly" and gracefully; but the "tenderness" was entirely galloped out of it. It is not too much to say that the accepted character of the piece was so altered that any one might be excused for not recognising it.

The last number was Beethoven's Violin and Piano Sonata in G, Op. 30, No. 3, and here again Madlle. Janotha's inclination to play too fast made itself felt in the serenely lovely "Tempo di minuetto, *ma molto moderato*." Madame Neruda, however, successfully dragged her back. The concert opened with Beethoven's Quintet, Op. 29, Messrs. Hollander and Gibson playing the two Viola parts. Mr. Brereton was the very successful vocalist.

The tonal unity which characterised Monday's programme was remarkable. Mozart's Quartet in C, No. 6, opened the concert, Haydn's Trio in the same key closed it; while the pieces which ended the first and began the second parts were respectively in C minor and F. The last-named, a sonata for violoncello and piano by Signor Piatti was heard for the first time. It consists of an *Allegro energico*, a *Romansa*, and a *finale* in Rondo form, in all of which the hand of a cultured and experienced musician is apparent. The themes, though not very striking, are well defined, and their developments flow with an ease which unmistakably betrays the nationality of the composer. In other respects, however, the style is German rather than Italian, reminding one at all times indeed of Mendelssohn. The fact that the sonata was played by the composer and Miss Fanny Davies renders a description of the performance or its reception wholly unnecessary. Our young English pianist chose as her solo Schumann's "Fantasiestücke," Op. 111, which has not previously been heard in its entirety at these concerts. We were disappointed with her reading of the last and, to our thinking, finest piece of the three. It lacked both fire and freedom. Madame Neruda, Messrs. Ries, Straus, and Piatti were responsible for the string parts of the quartet and trio, and, in the absence through indisposition of Miss Liza Lehmann, Miss Marguerite Hall (who had just returned from America) sang with much taste songs by Schubert and Goring Thomas.

LONDON SYMPHONY CONCERTS.

Tuesday's concert was chiefly interesting for the production of two novelties—McCunn's Overture "The Land o' the Mountain and the Flood," and a ballad for violin and orchestra from the pen of Mr. Henschel. The former of these has been already heard at the Crystal Palace, but was probably quite new to a large majority of the audience. It is a bright and spirited piece, the subject-matter melodious, the scoring full of picturesque details; and if the work as a whole does not obviously suggest its title, that is perhaps a matter of little consequence. Mr. McCunn conducted, with marked ability, an admirable performance. Mr. Henschel's ballad, remarkable for graceful and expressive themes and tasteful scoring, is a distinctly welcome addition to the repertory of the violin. The work was fortunate, in having as its interpreter Herr Wessely, whose broad sympathetic tone, true intonation and refined style, did ample justice to his composer. The symphony was the genial Brahms in D, of which Mr. Henschel secured an excellent rendering. The programme included also Glinka's humorous and characteristic fantasia "Komarinskaja" capably played, and Wagner's "Huldigung March" which was treated rather coarsely.

THE BURNS' BIRTHDAY CONCERT.

On the 25th ult. Burns's birthday was commemorated at St. James's Hall, by means of what is best described as a musical orgy. Before the "professional" concert began, an amateur performance was extemporised by the occupants of the gallery. Solos were sung by one or two ambitious spirits, who will not, we hope, take advantage of the fact to announce themselves to provincial audiences as "Mr. So-and-So from St. James's Hall, London," their efforts being more remarkable for zeal than for discretion. The choral attempts furnished a melancholy example of the enervating effects of a southern climate, "Scot's wha hae" and other favourite melodies being sung at a pace which suggested a commemoration of Burns

funeral rather than of his birth. It is only right to say that portion of the audience located on the orchestra gave scant encouragement to the singers up aloft. It might be urged, however, that this coolness was traceable to envy, those seated under the shadow of the "Kist o' whistles," being apparently unable to rival even the languid performances of the gallery vocalists. The concert proper was a sort of double-barrelled affair, each song, without exception, being followed by an encore, consisting in some cases of a repetition of the last verse, in others of a fresh song. As the pre-arranged concert alone consisted of twenty-three members it will readily be understood that no detailed criticism can be attempted. Nor, happily, is it necessary. Everyone can imagine the success likely to attend the efforts of such artists as Miss Liza Lehmann, Miss Macintyre and Madame Patey, Mr. Edward Lloyd and Mr. Santley. These were re-inforced by Miss Patti Winter, Miss Susetta Fenn, Mr. Durward Lely and the concert giver, Mr. Walter Clifford. The London Scottish Choir, under Mr. J. B. Shaw, their conductor, made a first appearance and a fairly good impression. Mr. Sidney Naylor accompanied not only with taste but without showing signs of fatigue.

PORTMAN ROOMS.

Mr. Carl Armbruster is so well known as a lecturer and pianist in connection with the Wagner propaganda, that his plucky attempt to enable amateurs to form an idea of Richard Wagner's wonderful music-drama "Tristan und Isolde" should have surprised no one. It needs no special insight to discover that Wagner's orchestration rendered on a Broadwood grand is shorn of at least half its moving power, or that unity is sacrificed by giving the work in sections of one act at a time. The recitals are valuable chiefly from an educational point of view; and, in the absence of opportunities for hearing the work under more favourable conditions, should be welcome. The performance of the first and second acts that took place on Monday and Thursday, but for obvious reasons, we are able to speak, now, only of the first recital.

Allowing for inevitable drawbacks the rendering was of high excellence. No one who knows anything about the subject will be disposed to underrate the vocal difficulties of "Tristan und Isolde," or indeed of any of Wagner's later works, and few therefore will grudge to Miss Pauline Cramer (Isolde), Miss Margaret Hoare (Brangaene), Mr. William Nicholl (Tristan), Mr. Wilfred Cunliffe (Kurwenal), Mr. B. H. Grove (King Marke), and Mr. Henry Phillips (Melot, a shepherd, and a sailor), the applause which on Monday so warmly greeted their accomplishment of a somewhat unthankful task. The work was sung in English, the translation by H. and F. Corder being used. With regard to the orchestral part, played with great mastery by Mr. Armbruster, it was not so disappointing as we had anticipated. Colour, of course, was wanting, but the wonderfully complex web of thematic development was easily followed by attentive ears, not a single important point being lost or even obscured. And what a marvel of organic unity it offers for the admiration of unprejudiced listeners! A "free fantasia" of an hour's duration, the logical necessity of every bar of which is determined by the succession of dramatic events. Surely the veriest stickler for symmetrical form should be willing to condone its absence in view of an achievement so consistent and successful. But we need not re-open the discussion of a threadbare subject. The principle on which "Tristan" is built can afford to wait; its acceptance is only a matter of time.

OTTO HEGNER'S RECITAL.

Master Otto Hegner is again with us, but as he has now the field all to himself the wonder loving public will not be called upon to estimate his claims by means of comparisons which, however, inevitable, were none the less odious. The little fellow went through a programme on Monday afternoon, which, though containing no more than six items, was sufficiently trying to satisfy even those whose pleasure in such exhibitions is derived rather from exercise of the sense of wonder than from artistic appreciation. Bach's Partita in B flat; Beethoven's "Waldstein" sonata; a Rhapsody of Liszt's; and three pieces by Schumann and Chopin, were played from memory, with unflinching accuracy and neatness. It is possible to go much further than this; however, in the case of the Partita, which was really well played. In Beethoven's sonata, of course, the brave little fellow was

overweighted, and his phrasing of Chopin's piece was rather wild. In short, the performance, while increasing one's admiration for the talent of the boy, once more clearly showed that the encouragement of prodigies is fraught with danger to art. The standard of taste is lowered in consideration of the personality of the executant. Sensation-lovers prefer the performance of a child at the edge of his powers, unripe in strength of intellect or experience of life and its emotions, to that of a mature artist able to reveal the inner meaning of the great works he interprets. They may perhaps not reason thus, but the fact remains all the same.

ENGLISH OPERA AT THE OLYMPIC.

Mr. Valentine Smith deserves well of the public for his plucky attempt at giving us a season of English opera, however inadequate the representation may be; but taking into consideration the size of the stage, it might have been much worse. Let us hope that the venture will be so far successful that Mr. Smith may see his way open to take a larger theatre and give us something more worthy the title of grand English opera. Wallace's popular "Maritana" was produced on Saturday last, and has held the boards since. Miss Clara Perry and Miss Emily Parkinson have alternately impersonated the heroine with considerable success. Mr. C. H. Victor looked and sang to advantage as Don Jose. Miss Louise Lyle was an excellent Lazarillo, and Mr. Valentine Smith was an admirable Don Cesar. The lesser characters were efficiently filled, and the orchestra under Mr. de Solla was satisfactory.

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERTS.

PRINCE'S HALL, PICCADILLY.—On Wednesday afternoon Miss Dora Bright gave the first of three pianoforte recitals, confirming the favourable opinions already formed of her talent. In her student-days at the Royal Academy, Miss Bright was remarkable for the vigour and solidity of her style. It was evident on Wednesday that in brilliancy and expressive power the young artist had already made great strides, and that she was not only able but willing to achieve all her effects by legitimate means. The works performed included compositions by Bach, Schumann, Chopin, Grieg, Liszt, Walter Macfarren and Moir Clark, besides two elegant trifles from Miss Bright's own pen. Her success was greatest perhaps in Schumann's Fantasia in C, Op. 17, in Bach's Prelude and Fugue in A minor (arranged by Liszt), and in four new studies by Mr. Walter Macfarren. The welcome element of variety was supplied by Mr. Arthur Thompson, who gave Pergolesi's "Tre giorni" and two songs by Sterndale Bennett, in his usual careful and refined manner.

MISS AMANDA IRA ALDRIDGE, a pupil of the late Madame Jenny Lind Goldschmidt, and late scholar of the Royal College of Music, gave her first concert at Steinway Hall, on Tuesday evening. The occasion was interesting chiefly by reason of the promise shown by Miss Aldridge's pupils, the Misses Taylor, Beatrice Riversdale, A. Wilkinson, Ada Bugler, and Gertrude Holt. Miss Aldridge has also a Choral Society, which was heard three times during the evening. She, however, did not limit the attractions of her concert to these encouraging exhibitions of her skill as a teacher. Miss Anna Lang contributed violin, and Miss Mary Macdonald pianoforte solos with much success, and Miss Aldridge and her sister sang duets and solos. Mr. Herbert Sims Reeves, who apparently inherits his famous father's susceptibility, was absent on account of a cold, and an apology had also to be made for Miss Kathleen Grant. Mr. D. Price was in consequence the only male vocalist, proving, however, fully capable of satisfying all demands.

Foreign Notes.

The cremation of the remains of Madame Ilma di Murska and her daughter took place last week at Gotha. Very pathetic are the inscriptions on the urns in which the ashes were placed. On that of the *prima donna* were the words: "Ashes are all that remain of the nightingale;" on her daughter's, "The woman whose remains be here, has battled and suffered much in vain."

We are indebted to Mr. W. W. Linton for the following list of Madame di Murska's principal appearances, with the part played by her in each opera:—

Date of first performance of each opera sung by her in London: 1. May 11, 1865, "Lucia di Lammermoor" (Donizetti), Lucia; 2. May 22, 1865, "Linda di Chamounix" (Donizetti), Linda; 3. May 30, 1865, "La Sonnambula" (Bellini), Amina; 4. June 17, 1865, "Les Huguenots" (Meyerbeer), Margherita; 5. July 6, 1865, "Il Flauto Magico" (Mozart), Astrifiamante; 6. May 26, 1866, "Dinorah" (Meyerbeer), Dinorah; 7. July 5, 1866, "Robert le Diable" (Meyerbeer), Isabella; 8. July 23, 1866, "Don Giovanni" (Mozart), Donna Elvira; 9. April 24, 1869, "I Puritani" (Bellini), Elvira; 10. November 16, 1869, "Hamlet" (Thomas), Ophelia; 11. December 7, 1869, "Marta" (Flotow), Marta; 12. April 16, 1870, "Rigoletto" (Verdi), Gilda; 13. June 16, 1870, "Il Trovatore" (Verdi), Leonora; 14. July 23, 1870, "L'Ollandese Dannato" (Wagner), Senta; 15. October 24, 1879, "Mignon" (Thomas), Filina.

In addition to her London parts she sang in the following operas: at Berlin: June, 1864, "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" (Rossini), Rosina; June, 1864, "La Dame Blanche" (Auber), Anna. At Vienna: August, 1865, "Il Seraglio" (Mozart), Constanza; February, 27, 1866, "L'Africaine" (Meyerbeer), Inez; March, 1867, "L'Etoile du Nord" (do), Caterina; April, 1867, "Ilka" (Doppler), Ilka; March, 1868, "Romeo et Juliette" (Gounod), Juliette. At Paris: February, 20, 1869, "Un Ballo in Maschera" (Verdi), Oscar. At Melbourne: March, 1876, "Faust" (Gounod), Margherita. At New York: February 14, 1879, "Don Pasquale" (Donizetti), Norina.

We were enabled, some time since, to state that Boito's new opera, "Nero," was almost completed. It is now announced by a correspondent of "La Nazione," a Milan paper, that the composer "has written 'Finis' to the score," since he is convinced that he can neither add to it nor improve it." The work which is in six tableaux, finishing with the Emperor's suicide, will not be produced until the Carnival of 1890.

Wagner's music is gradually, but surely, obtaining a firm footing in the South of France. Recently a concert was given at Bordeaux, when an important series of excerpts from his works were performed; and now information is to hand concerning a concert at Marseilles, where the Fire Music from the "Walkure" was given for the first time, and enthusiastically redemanded. Even the French critics admit the "truly heroic" impression produced.

Madame Marguerite de Pachmann gave a pianoforte recital last week at Paris, where her performances are spoken of very highly. She will shortly appear at M. Colonne's concerts.

Madame Adelina Patti sang recently at a charity-concert given, by M. Edouard Elkan, in aid of the poor of Brussels. It goes without saying that, with such help, the concert was an unequivocal success. The *diva*, who, as our readers are aware, generously gave her services, sang the waltz air from "Roméo et Juliette," Gounod's "Ave Maria," "Home, sweet Home," "The last Rose of Summer" and Madame de Rothschild's "Si vous n'avez rien à me dire." By way of prologue, Mlle. Reichenberg spoke the following verses from the pen of M. Emile Blémont:

Mesdames et Messieurs, soyez tous en liesse!
Je viens, sans longs discours ni traits fastidieux,
Comme autre fois Iris, messagère des dieux,
Vous annoncer une déesse.

La déesse du chant!—Suprême charmeresse,
Elle a pour les mortels ce nom mélodieux:
Adelina Patti. Par les jours radieux
On l'appelait Euterpe en Grèce.

La Charité l'amène. Elle apporte à la fois
Pour le pauvre et pour vous les trésors de sa voix
De sa voix si pure et si douce!

C'est l'hiver, c'est le temps de rhumes inhumains
Et nous serons heureux si nul de nous ne tousse
Avant d'avoir battu des mains.

The proposed performances of "Tannhäuser" at Bayreuth, are now postponed until 1890. The scenic and other mechanical preparations for it have, however, already been begun by Herr Kranich of Dresden. It is probable that as the Prince Regent has taken the Bayreuth Theatre under his patronage, the orchestra of the Munich Court Theatre, under the direction of Levy, who is now again completely restored to health, may co-operate. In this case Levy will conduct "Parsifal;" Felix Mottl "Tristan;" and Richter the "Meistersinger."

The tenor, Van Dyck, has made a highly successful appearance in Berlin. A leading critic complains of his pronunciation, but praises his clearness of enunciation and remarks that on the whole he is a phenomenon of the first rank.

A new Overture, by Joachim, in memory of the poet Kleist, was given at the seventh Philharmonic Concert at Berlin, under Dr. von Bülow, on the 21st. Its workmanship is highly praised, but its poetic affinity to the subject which gives it its name was less apparent.

The "Gazzetta Musicale" of Milan, for January 13, contained an interesting account of the late distinguished librarian of the Naples Conservatoire, Signor Florimo, who died on December 18, last year, at the age of 88, having been born October 12, 1800, and not in 1806, as stated by Fétis. Florimo, in his earlier years, produced many collections of songs (chiefly to words in the Neapolitan dialect), which had sufficient merit to win for their author very great popularity, but he will probably be better known to posterity by his historical works, the chief of which is his "Storia dei Conservatori di Napoli," a standard work on the subject with which it deals. He also wrote a biography of his countryman, Lauro Rossi, and a volume relating to Bellini. But though specially an authority on the subject of Italian music of the eighteenth century, Florimo did not refuse to study music of a very different sort, and he did something to introduce among his countrymen a knowledge of the works of Richard Wagner. Of his official work, it is sufficient to say that it is almost entirely due to his enterprise and industry that the library of the Naples Conservatoire owes its present—almost unique—value.

It appears from the official statistics that at the Theatre Royal of Munich there were produced, during the year 1888, one hundred and sixty-six different operas.

Madame Marie Roze will visit Malta during the month of February, and will perform in "Faust," "Carmen," and "Aïda."

A memorial tablet has been affixed to the house in the Huisen strasse of Berlin, in which Lortzing, the composer of "Die beiden Schützen" and "Czaar und Zimmerman," died in 1852.

Reviews.

From Messrs. Marriott and Williams, 295, Oxford Street, we have:—

- (a) "Come, May, with all thy flowers" ... J. S. Gardner.
(b) "Come back, my love, to me" ... "

a. A graceful but conventional melody, with flute or violin obbligato. b. A quaint and expressive little song, also with accompaniment for violin.

From the Viaduct Publishing Company, 6, Newman Street:—

- (a) "The young old maid" ... Arthur W. Marchant.
(b) "Neath Angel Wings" ... Max Derric

a. An unpretentious, but concise, bright, and cheery setting of humorous words. b. A good song. The composer is evidently an admirer of the "Lost Chord."

From Messrs. Ascherberg & Co., Regent Street:—

- (a) "Bootle's Baby" March ... Ellie Norwood
(b) { "Faust up to Date" Valse ... Meyer Lutz.
 "Faust up to Date" Lancers ... "

a. A good spirited march of the popular type. b. These embody the music of the burlesque in a very *dansante* form.

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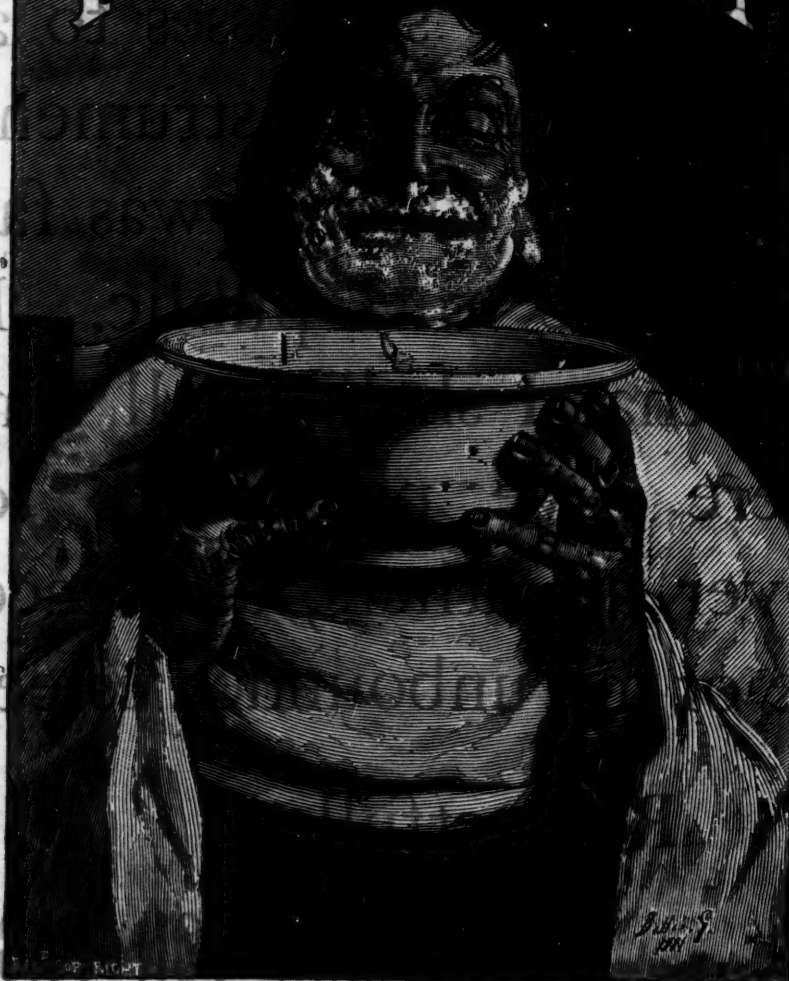
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